



Presentation Primary School

School Bí Cineálta Policy to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour

Updated September 2025

The Board of Management of Presentation Primary School has adopted the following policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour.

This policy fully complies with the requirements of *Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools 2024*.

The board of management acknowledges that bullying behaviour interferes with the rights of the child as set out in the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child. We all, as a school community, have a responsibility to work together to prevent and address bullying behaviour and to deal with the negative impact of bullying behaviour.

We are committed to ensuring that all students who attend our school are kept safe from harm and that the wellbeing of our students is at the forefront of everything that we do. We recognise the negative impact that bullying behaviour can have on the lives of our students and we are fully committed to preventing and addressing bullying behaviour.

We confirm that we will, in accordance with our obligations under equality legislation, take all such steps that are reasonably practicable to prevent the harassment of students or staff on any of the nine grounds specified: gender, civil status, family status, sexual orientation, religion, age, disability, race and membership of the Traveller community.

Definition of bullying

Bullying is defined in *Cineáltas: Action Plan on Bullying* and *Bí Cineálta: Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools* as targeted behaviour, online or offline that causes harm. The harm caused can be physical, social and/or emotional in nature. Bullying behaviour is repeated over time and involves an imbalance of power in relationships between two people or groups of people in society. The detailed definition is provided in Chapter 2 of the *Bí Cineálta* procedures.

Each school is required to develop and implement a *Bí Cineálta* policy that sets out how the school community prevents and addresses bullying behaviour. Strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour that is not bullying behaviour are provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour.

Section A: Development/review of our Bí Cineálta policy to prevent and address bullying behaviour

All members of our school community were provided with the opportunity to input into the development/review of this policy.

	Date consulted	Method of consultation
School Staff	04.04.2025	Small group discussion at staff meeting
Students	08.05.2025	World Café discussion with representative group
Parents	08.05.2025	Questionnaire on Aladdin 10 questions
Board of Management	20.05.2025	BOM Meeting
Wider school community as appropriate, for example, bus drivers		
Date policy was approved:		
Date policy was last reviewed:		

Section B: Preventing Bullying Behaviour

This section sets out the prevention strategies that will be used by the school. These include strategies specifically aimed at preventing online bullying behaviour, homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour, racist bullying behaviour, sexist bullying behaviour and sexual harassment as appropriate:

- We create a “telling” environment, where children feel comfortable reporting incidents of bullying behaviour.
- We strive to provide all children with “a trusted adult” – someone they can confide in: a class teacher, Special Ed teacher, SNA, principal.
- We strive to create safe physical spaces where behaviour can be easily observed and monitored by school staff.
- We provide a high level of adult supervision during play time and during unstructured activities.
- In terms of Curriculum, we adhere to the SPHE curriculum provided by the Department of Education. We provide many opportunities for the children to develop their social skills and understanding:
 - Zippy’s Friends
 - Friends for Life
 - Weaving Well Being
 - Walk Tall
 - Stay Safe
 - Social Stories
 - Grow in Love
 - RSE Lessons
 - Drama

- We create a positive school climate by modelling kindness. We use a number of strategies to promote kindness and justice for all:
 - Nurture
 - Restorative Practice
 - Trauma Informed Practice
 - Emotional Coaching
 - Approachable Staff
 - Attractive Play Spaces
 - Assemblies
 - Prayer Services
 - Kindness Awards
 - Celebration of Diversity

- We promote positive relationships and partnerships across the whole school community:
 - Parents and teachers develop collaborative relationships built on trust and respect. This facilitates the early resolution of disputes or poor behaviour.
 - Children are actively encouraged to participate fully in school life through participation in choirs, team sports, public speaking, book clubs, debating, buddy reading, shared play, open playground system, school concerts, play and performances. We have an active Student Council which is involved in decision making.
 - Our Pupil Support Team and Nurture Team support children when necessary by providing a quiet space and a trusted adult to confide in.
 - Our breakfast club provides a transition space between home and school for the children who find that part of the day challenging.
 - We support activities that build empathy, respect and resilience.
 - We promote acts of kindness and present awards for achievements that are not based on academic excellence.
 - Parents are actively encouraged to participate in school life. We provide opportunities for parents to attend "Hug Your Book"

mornings to promote reading at home. Parents are encouraged to attend Sports Day, Family Day, Book Fair, Cake Sale, Coffee Mornings, Parent / Teacher Meetings, Open Days, concerts, debates and performances. We have an active parents' council.

- We have developed positive relationships with NEPS and the NCSE, who offer support with challenging behaviour and educational needs.

➤ Technology and social media have provided many positive opportunities for entertainment, social engagement and education. Technology is a part of life that can impact even the youngest members of society. However, the increase in the use of technology has led to students becoming increasingly vulnerable to cyberbullying or unacceptable online behaviour.

We proactively address these challenges by promoting digital literacy, digital citizenship, and fostering safe online environments. Strategies to prevent cyberbullying behaviour include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:

- Implementing the SPHE curriculum
- Implementing the Digital Media Literacy curriculum which teaches students about responsible online behaviour and digital citizenship
- Having regular conversations with children about developing respectful and kind relationships online
- Developing and communicating an acceptable use policy for technology
- Referring to appropriate online behaviour as part of the standards of behaviour in the Code of Behaviour
- Promoting or hosting online safety events for parents who are responsible for overseeing their children's activities online*
- Holding an Internet safety day to reinforce awareness around appropriate online behaviour

The digital age of consent is the minimum age a user must be before a social media or internet company can collect, process and store their data. In Ireland the digital age of consent is 16.

For the purposes of data collection, students between the age of 13 and 16 years old must have parental permission to sign up to social media services where companies use the legal basis of consent to collect process and store users' data. Most social media platforms and services have a minimum age requirement and for the majority of these services it is 13 years' old. Therefore technically, children under the age of 13 should not have a social media account.

It is important for their child's safety, that parents are aware of their children's use of technology including smartphones and gaming consoles.

*Resources have been developed to support parents and parent associations that wish to develop voluntary codes regarding smartphone use among primary school children. These are contained in the Resources Guide which accompanies these procedures.

- All students including gay, lesbian, bisexual and transgender students, have a right to feel safe and supported at school.

Strategies to prevent homophobic and transphobic bullying behaviour include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:

- Maintaining an inclusive physical environment
 - Encouraging peer support such as peer mentoring and empathy building activities
 - Challenging gender-stereotypes
 - Encouraging students to speak up when they witness homophobic behaviour
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- Our school has become much more culturally diverse over the last number of decades. Our children come from many different cultures

and backgrounds. Strategies to prevent racist bullying behaviour include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:

- Fostering a school culture where diversity is celebrated and where students “see themselves” in their school environment
 - Having the cultural diversity of the school visible and on display
 - Encouraging peer support such as peer mentoring and empathy building activities
 - Encouraging bystanders to report when they witness racist behaviour
 - Providing supports to school staff to respond to the needs of students for whom English is an additional language and for communicating with their parents
 - Providing supports to school staff to support students from ethnic minorities, including Traveller and Roma students, and to encourage communication with their parents
 - Ensuring that library reading material and textbooks represent appropriate lived experiences of students and adults from different national, ethnic and cultural backgrounds
- We focus on gender equality as part of the school’s measures to create a supportive and respectful environment.

Strategies to prevent sexist bullying behaviour include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:

- Ensuring members of staff model respectful behaviour and treat children equally irrespective of their sex
- Ensuring all children have the same opportunities to engage in school activities irrespective of their sex
- Celebrating diversity at school and acknowledging the contributions of all students
- Encouraging parents to reinforce these values of respect at home
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- Preventing sexual harassment requires an approach that focuses on education, awareness and clear enforceable policies. Schools must make it clear that there is a zero-tolerance approach to sexual harassment. Sexual harassment should never be dismissed as teasing or banter.

Strategies to prevent sexual harassment include the following, which is not an exhaustive list:

- Promoting positive role models within the school community
- Challenging gender stereotypes that can contribute to sexual harassment

The school has the following supervision and monitoring policies in place to prevent and address bullying behaviour:

➤ Morning Arrival Supervision:

- On arrival at school, children are met in the playground by the Senior Management Team from 8.35am – 8.50am.
- Supervision is the responsibility of parents / guardians until 8.50am

➤ Breaktimes:

- We have five zones for playtime, each supervised by two adults

➤ Unstructured:

- Sports, trips, outings, after-school clubs etc. We ensure adequate levels of supervision for all such activities

➤ Departure from school:

- Class teachers accompany their classes as they exit the building to the playgrounds
- The Bí Cineálta policy is supported by other school policies such as the Code of Behaviour, Acceptable Use Policy, Supervision Policy, Special Education Policy, Swimming Policy and Mobile Phone Policy. The well-being of the whole school community is of paramount importance to the Board of Management.
- Child friendly Bí Cineálta Policy is displayed throughout the school

Section C: Addressing Bullying Behaviour

The teacher with responsibility for addressing bullying behaviour is the class teacher in the first instance. The principal shall be notified if bullying behaviour has occurred.

When bullying behaviour occurs, the school will:

- ❖ ensure that the student experiencing bullying behaviour is heard and reassured
- ❖ seek to ensure the privacy of those involved
- ❖ conduct all conversations with sensitivity
- ❖ consider the age and ability of those involved
- ❖ listen to the views of the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour as to how best to address the situation
- ❖ take action in a timely manner
- ❖ inform parents of those involved

The steps that will be taken by the school to determine if bullying behaviour has occurred, the approaches taken to address the bullying behaviour and to review progress are as follows (see Chapter 6 of the Bí Cineálta procedures):

Approach

The primary aim in addressing reports of bullying behaviour should be to stop the bullying behaviour and to restore, as far as practicable, the relationships of the students involved, rather than to apportion blame.

The class teacher will use the following questions to determine whether the behaviour reported is bullying behaviour:

- Is the behaviour targeted at a specific student or group of students?
- Is the behaviour intended to cause physical, social or emotional harm?
- Is the behaviour repeated?

If the answer to each of these questions is “YES” then the behaviour is bullying behaviour and shall be addressed using the Bí Cineálta procedures outlined on page 13.

Note: One-off incidents may be considered bullying in certain circumstances. A single message posted on social media can be considered bullying behaviour as it has a high likelihood of being shared multiple times and thus becomes a repeated behaviour.

If the answer to any of these questions is “NO”, then the behaviour is not bullying behaviour and shall be addressed using our Code of Behaviour.

When identifying if bullying behaviour has occurred teachers should consider what, where, when and why?

- If a group of students is involved, each student shall be engaged with individually at first
- Thereafter, all students involved shall be met as a group

- At the group meeting, each student shall be asked for their account of what happened to ensure that everyone in the group is clear about each other's views
- Each student should be supported as appropriate, following the group meeting
- Students involved may be asked to write down their account of the incident(s)

Where bullying behaviour has occurred:

- The class teacher shall notify the principal immediately
- Parents are an integral part of the school community and play an important role, in partnership with schools, in addressing bullying behaviour. Where bullying behaviour has occurred, the parents of the students involved shall be contacted at an early stage to inform them of the matter and to consult with them on the actions to be taken to address the behaviour
- It is important to listen to the views of the student who is experiencing the bullying behaviour as to how best to address the situation
- A record shall be kept of the engagement with all involved
- This record should document the form and type of bullying behaviour, if known, where and when it took place and the date of the initial engagement with the students involved and their parents
- The record shall include the views of the students and their parents regarding the actions to be taken to address the bullying behaviour

Follow up where bullying behaviour has occurred:

- The teacher and principal must engage with the students involved and their parents again no more than 20 school days after the initial engagement

- Important factors to consider as part of this engagement are the nature of the bullying behaviour, the effectiveness of the strategies used to address the bullying behaviour and the relationship between the students involved
- The teacher and principal should document the review with students and their parents to determine if the bullying behaviour has ceased and the views of students and their parents in relation to this
- The date that it has been determined that the bullying behaviour has ceased shall also be recorded
- Any engagement with external services/supports shall also be noted
- Ongoing supervision and support may be needed for the students involved even where bullying behaviour has ceased
- If the bullying behaviour has not ceased the teacher shall review the strategies used in consultation with the students involved and their parents. A timeframe shall be agreed for further engagement until the bullying behaviour has ceased
- If it becomes clear that the student who is displaying the bullying behaviour is continuing to display the behaviour, then the school consideration should be given to using the strategies to deal with inappropriate behaviour as provided for within the school's Code of Behaviour. If disciplinary sanctions are considered, this is a matter between the relevant student, their parents and the school
- If a parent(s) is not satisfied with how the bullying behaviour has been addressed by the school, in accordance with the Bí Cineálta Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools. they should be referred to the school's complaints procedures
- If a parent is dissatisfied with how a complaint has been handled, they may make a complaint to the Ombudsman for Children if they believe that the school's actions have had a negative effect on the student.

The school will use the following approaches to support those who experience, witness and display bullying behaviour:

- The class teacher shall conduct a daily “check-in” with the students involved in the bullying behaviour
- If the behaviour is ongoing, the principal shall be notified
- Some students may need the support of the SNA team or the Nurture Team in the short / medium or long term, depending on the circumstances
- We may need to request NEPS (National Educational Psychological Support) involvement in order to support students involved in bullying behaviour

Procedures to Prevent and Address Bullying Behaviour for Primary and Post-Primary Schools

All bullying behaviour will be recorded. This will include the type of behaviour, where and when it took place, and the date of the engagement with students and parents. The actions and supports agreed to address bullying behaviour will be documented. If the bullying behaviour is a child protection concern the matter will be addressed without delay in accordance with *Child Protection Procedures for Primary and Post-Primary Schools*.

Section D: Oversight

The principal will present an update on bullying behaviour at each board of management meeting. This update will include the number of incidents of bullying behaviour that have been reported since the last meeting, the number of ongoing incidents and the total number of incidents since the beginning of the school year. Where incidents of bullying behaviour have occurred, the principal will also provide a verbal update which will include where relevant, information relating to trends and patterns identified, strategies used to address the bullying behaviour and any wider strategies to prevent and address bullying behaviour where relevant. This update does not contain personal or identifying information.

This policy is available to our school community on the school's website and in hard copy on request. A student friendly version of this policy is displayed in the school and is also available on our website and in hard copy on request.

This policy and its implementation will be reviewed, following input from our school community, each calendar year or as soon as practicable after there has been a material change in any matter to which this policy refers.

Signed: Mary Ryan
(Chairperson of board of management)

Date: 30/09/2025

Signed: Sinead O'Shea
(Principal)

Date: 30/9/2025